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New York, Jan. 10, 1900.

To the Editor of THE COLLECTOR AND ART CRITIC:

The recent "monotype" dinner given by the Salmagundi Club to its members and their friends, proved to be one of the most enjoyable and interesting artistic events of the season.

As is the custom at all of the club dinners, music was of course furnished, along with an extremely satisfying menu, and the participants on this occasion had every reason to congratulate themselves at being present.

At the end of the dinner the tables were cleared and zinc plates, 8x10 in size, together with the necessary materials for monotype painting, were distributed, and it was not many moments before a majority of the artists present were busily at work.

A monotype press was placed at one end of the room, and as soon as a plate was finished it was run through and a print taken.

Of course, in making monotypes it is always a matter of surprise to the artist when he sees the result of his work printed on paper, be the result gratifying or otherwise. It is almost impossible to gain an idea of what the painting or the plate will prove to be. But the way in which Mr. Crane or Mr. Birney, who were attending to the printing of the monotypes, would shout "There's a good one," and then let the heavy iron bed of the press bound off the table and thump the floor, gave every evidence that the number of "good ones" that were pulled had proved the evening well spent.

At a future date it is the intention of the club to dispose of the monotypes at a sale, to be given in connection with another dinner, and it behooves all who are interested in monotype art to be present.

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In visiting a neighboring city, not long ago, it was my ill-fortune to visit a public building in which was to be seen a gallery of paintings, the private collection of some wealthy gentleman at whose death the city had come into possession.

With all due respect to this generous art lover who, thoughtlessly, I surmise, had gathered together these canvases, I nevertheless regret that a city whose broad-shaded avenues and artistic homes make it an ideal spot, should find itself encumbered with such a collection of inferior art.

It would be difficult to mention one canvas that is really of a high degree of excellence. There are, perhaps, two or three pictures that have some redeeming qualities, but the rest are certainly poor examples of artistic skill, and I have found work of equal inferiority in other private collections, and I wonder at it.

It is indeed sad to think that a man of wealth, whose tastes lead him into buying pictures, can be so easily led into purchasing bad art; and I'll warrant he gets most of the stuff at bargain auction sales, where with white-gloved lackies and plush draperies, together with a terrible searchlight and a glib-tongued crier, every daub looks a masterpiece and every bidder becomes a fool.

How much better it would be for these wealthy collectors if they would associate themselves with some one who thoroughly knows good art from bad, and follow his advice in making a purchase.

Better still would it be if they visited the studios of American painters and collect canvases from off the easel, as did Mr. Stewart among the foreign artists.

If it is a bargain this collector is after, I doubt not but what he would find many a one if he should patronize the younger talent of the studios whose work would, nine cases out of ten, increase in value, while his private gallery would be adorned with good, sincere work that would always find a place of welcome wherever seen.

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There is scarcely a manufacturer or dealer now-a-days but what finds himself compelled to advertise his wares in some conspicuous place and manner, and as trade and business increases the demand for judicious and catchy advertising finds itself more and more felt. Every new, up-to-date bicycle, typewriter or bar of soap must have its merits brought before the eyes of the reading public, and the consequence is that the street cars and bill boards, the magazines and newspapers blaze with advertisements.

But as competition increases, type alone is found to be inadequate, the advertisement must catch the eye and hold its attention, and so art is called into play, and the notice is illustrated with a cut.

Now the point I wish to bring up is, that as art is to play such an important part in the commercial life of the day, why not have good art? Not masterpieces, of course; it would be absurd to reproduce a famous painting on the side of a soap box or a tomato can—but if pictures

are to be used why not strive to have good ones? I recall now a bicycle advertisement in particular, where a drawing is used to make the announcement attractive. The design represents a girl coasting down hill on her bicycle. The bicycle is drawn correctly in every detail; one can actually read the name plate on the wheel. But look at the girl spinning down the road. Her hips are twice as wide as across her shoulders; she has eyes that look like English walnuts, and hair enough on her head to fill a wheel-barrow; and then, as if to give a dainty finish to the picture, this already impossible creature is given feet that are the portion of those of a two-weeks-old infant, still the boots have pointed toes and the heels are French.

Run through the advertising pages of our monthly magazines and see how the sacred beauty of art is distorted and scandalized by beastly trash.

Young men and women leave the art school, and many find themselves compelled to earn a living by their art. They are not experienced enough to get work for publishers and so turn to illustrating advertisements. Many of these students start out with clever ideas and a good sense of drawing. But their good drawing counts as nothing with the business man. He wants something impossible, something crude; he must have something that will make people stare and it matters not how it is done so long as the idea is expressed as he wants to see it. The business man knows nothing about art, but he is so pleased with his own brainy schemes that he forces his ignorance upon the public and the high ideals of the art student crumble before his opposition.

The poster craze that swept over the country a few years ago had its good effect, and for a time benefited the people. But cheap work had to find its way, the silly opinions of the business man crowded out the artistic spirit that was being fostered, and the poster craze has been run into the ground.

The artistic productions of Cheret, Dudley Hardy and other noted poster designers had opened the eyes of the public to the fact that an advertisement could indeed be a work of art, and the collection of art posters became the fad—but the artist who depended on poster and advertising work for a living could not fight against the crazy ideals of the business man, and the whole thing has had a tumble. To-day with few exceptions, our magazines and bill boards are cheapened and degraded with a lot of rubbish, whereas if the mind of the advertiser would open to the possibilities of art and give the artist and the art student a chance, his advertisement would become more attractive and would be more readily sought for by the reading public.

A YANKEE.



## PARIS SKETCHES.

December 30.

A row of red-brick houses, with green grass, winding walks and trees in the foreground, would scarcely be considered "paintable," but that it may be made so Mr. Frits Thaulow has proven in a magnificent picture now on exhibition at the establishment of Boussod, Valadon & Co. The clever Norwegian artist has chosen for his subject a scene in Washington. The square buildings with their rows of green blinds, are typical southern houses of fifty years ago. Mr. Thaulow has invested his picture with so much local color and such charm that it must be considered one of the most important and interesting things he has yet given to the public.

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The exhibition of works by "The Woman's Art Association of Paris" is an interesting one, although few of the pictures are by artists of note, Miss Lee-Robbins and Elizabeth Nourse being exceptions. The former is represented by two canvases, a portrait of a girl in hat and gown of peculiarly intense blue, and a charming study of a little girl in white. Miss Nourse shows a "Holland Interior," two peasants, a girl and a man, seated before a large, old-fashioned fireplace. Her second study is a small one of "The Sleepy Baby." Mrs. Newman, whose work is fairly well known, exhibits several pictures, one of an old woman saying her beads being the best.

Mary Shephard Green's "Summer" is a thoroughly decorative study of a girl in pale yellow against a delicate green foliage background. A very pretty picture of a young mother and child under an arbor of trees, is by Lavinia Kelley. Miss Norcross shows a dainty sketch of "An Interior," and Miss Elizabeth Burton, a bit of the quaint book market on the quay.

Miss Maury's pastel sketches, entitled, "The Late Breakfast," and "Mother and Child," are charming and original in treatment. Miss An-